DD News Channel

1581. PROF. M. SANKARALINGAM: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that DD is coming up with a News Channel;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) how it would be able to compete with already existing popular news channels; and

(d) in what way it would mobilise the inputs and resources to start this News Channel?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) to (c) Prasar Bharati has informed that the Prasar Bharati Board has decided, in principle, to convert DD Metro into 24 hours News Channel. The decision has been taken to fulfil a growing desire for news among the viewers, particularly among those without cable connection.

Prasar Bharati is of the opinion that with its terrestrial edge and the brand value of credibility and objectively, it will not take long for the proposed News Channel to establish itself despite competition from the existing private news channels. DD News Channel will retain its own identity, character and positioning.

(d) Prasar Bharati has informed that the new channel will have in-house round the clock bulletins, current affairs programmes which will be largely in-house, with a mix of sponsored, commissioned, co-production/off the shelf acquisition. Additional manpower and technical upgradation will also be required.

Documentary film on Kutch earthquake

1582. SHRI KARTAR SINGH DUGGAL: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) what are Government's finding about the rejection of the documentary on 'Kutch quake by the Censor Board apart

from the faulty language as the makers of the film are crying fowl; and

(b) whether the film is being referred to the Film Certification Appellate Tribunal for second opinion?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) The Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC) has informed that the film "Chords on the Richter Scale" has been refused certification as it was seen to be inimical to communal amity and was violative of guidelines for certification.

(b) CBFC has informed that the applicant has applied to the Film Certification Appellate Tribunal.

Outstanding dues against producers

†1583. SHRI MOTILAL VORA: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a huge amount is outstanding against the producers of various serials of Doordarshan;

(b) if so, the names of such producers;

(c) the amount outstanding against each producer and since when; and

(d) the steps taken by Government to recover it?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) Details of major defaulting agencies (principal amount), on National Channel provided by Prasar Bharati and action taken by them for recovery are given in enclosed Statements I and II respectively.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.